



**3rd Expeditionary Sustainment Command  
16<sup>th</sup> Sustainment Brigade  
Public Affairs Office**

Contingency Operating Base Q-West, Iraq  
DSN (NIPR) 318-827-6101  
DSN (SIPR) 302-243-5104  
[keith.anderson@iraq.centcom.mil](mailto:keith.anderson@iraq.centcom.mil)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
3rd ESC Release #  
August 7, 2009

## **Iraqi leader hosts feast, honors American friends**

By Capt. Murray Shugars  
2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 198<sup>th</sup> Combined Arms

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE Q-WEST, Iraq — A local Iraqi leader hosted a traditional feast to say goodbye to two battalions from the Washington Army National Guard at Katar Restaurant, a Turkish owned and operated eatery, here July 30.

Dr. Muhammed Ismail Ahmed, known as “Doc Mo” to military leaders here, acts as a liaison to Coalition forces for more than 50 rural villages surrounding Q-West. He said his farewells to Soldiers and leaders from the 81<sup>st</sup> Brigade Special Troops Battalion and the 181<sup>st</sup> Brigade Support Battalion, and welcomed Soldiers from the 2/198<sup>th</sup> Combined Arms Battalion, Mississippi Army National Guard, during the meal.

“It is an ancient Iraqi custom to share food and drink as a sign of friendship and brotherhood,” said Ahmed, who holds a medical degree from the University of Mosul. “I want to show that we are brothers, that we are one family. I want to thank all our brothers, those who have been with us this last year and those who have arrived to be with us during the coming year.”

The 81<sup>st</sup> BSTB managed the base defense operations center and the 181<sup>st</sup> BSB ran the Mayor Cell. The two units transferred authority to the 2/198<sup>th</sup> CAB during a ceremony here July 27

Col. Martin B. Pitts, 16<sup>th</sup> Sustainment Brigade commander, thanked Doc Mo for the dinner and the opportunity to say goodbye to many leaders he has worked closely with for the past ten months.

“I am grateful that Dr. Ahmed has given us this opportunity,” said Pitts. “He has been a friend to U.S. Soldiers, and he has played an important role in strengthening U.S. and Iraqi relations in the region, helping us achieve our shared goal of building a safe and secure Iraq.”

Lt. Col. William B. Smith, Q-West Mayor, 2/198<sup>th</sup> CAB, said that working closely with Iraqi leaders is essential to success.

“The U.S. military's approach has changed, and we have a smaller footprint in the sovereign nation of Iraq,” said Smith, a native of Hattiesburg, Miss. “For us to continue our success here, we must sustain and further strengthen relations at the local level, with regional and city leaders, especially with those who reach out to us as Dr. Ahmed has done over the years.”

Smith said that the 2/198<sup>th</sup> CAB will continue to work with Doc Mo, as the 181<sup>st</sup> BSB had done before.

“He is a respected figure in the local Iraqi community, and we want to build on the relationship we have with him,” said Smith.

Ahmed said he was born into this role.

“It is a tradition in my family to build bonds with different tribes,” said Ahmed. “My grandfather, who owned a thousand sheep and a thousand goats, built strong relationships with the tribes 80 or 90 years ago, and so did my father in his day. The Americans are to me like another tribe. They are different, with different customs and religions, but they are here and we must work together.”



Guests of Dr. Muhammed Ismail Ahmed, a liaison to Coalition forces for many surrounding rural villages, gathered to feast at Katar Restaurant, a Turkish owned and operated eatery, at Contingency Operating Base Q-West, Iraq July 30. Ahmed hosted the dinner to say goodbye to leaders from the 81<sup>st</sup> Brigade Special Troops Battalion and the 181<sup>st</sup> Brigade Support Battalion, and welcome leaders from the 2/198<sup>th</sup> Combined Arms Battalion, Mississippi Army National Guard. (Photos by Capt. Murray Shugars)





Dr. Muhammed Ismail Ahmed, a general practitioner and tribal liaison, speaks with Col. Martin B. Pitts, brigade commander, 16<sup>th</sup> Sustainment Brigade, during a dinner hosted by Ahmed at Katar Restaurant at Contingency Operating Base Q-West, Iraq July 30.



Dr. Muhammed Ismail Ahmed, a general practitioner and tribal liaison official, speaks at a dinner he hosted to bid farewell to leaders from the 81<sup>st</sup> Brigade Special Troops

Battalion and the 181<sup>st</sup> Brigade Support Battalion, and welcome leaders from the 2/198<sup>th</sup> Combined Arms Battalion, Mississippi Army National Guard, at Katar Restaurant at Contingency Operating Base Q-West, Iraq July 30.